

Massachusetts Water Resources Commission Meeting Minutes for August 12, 1999

Commission Members in Attendance:

Mark P. Smith	Designee, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
Richard Thibedeau	Designee, Department of Environmental Management
Lee Corte-Real	Designee, Department of Food & Agriculture
Arleen O'Donnell	Designee, Department of Environmental Protection
Mark Tisa	Designee, Department of Fisheries, Wildlife & Environmental Law Enforcement
Joe McGinn	Metropolitan District Commission
Joe Pelczarski	Coastal Zone Management
Richard Butler	Public Member
Gary Clayton	Public Member
Bob Zimmerman	Public Member
David Rich	Public Member
Frank Veale	Public Member

Others in Attendance:

Ken Simmons	MDFW
Michele Drury	DEM/OWR
Vicki Gartland	DEM/OWR
John Magenheimer	DEM/OWR
Martin Pillsbury	MAPC
Andrew Miller	CDM
Lorraine M. Downey	MWRA
Susan Redlich	Wastewater Advisory Committee, Charlestown
Duane LeVangie	DEP/DWP
Lealdon Langley	DEP
Ron Sharpin	MDC
Jeanne M. Fleming	Assistant Town Manager, Stoughton
Joseph M. Mokrisky	Chairman, Stoughton Board of Selectmen
David Graber	Cedar Swamp Committee, Stoughton
James Miller	Town of Stoughton
William Hahn	Town of Stoughton
Roberta A. Camacho	Town of Stoughton
Jo Ann Sprague	Senator, Norfolk, Bristol Plymouth District
Karen Laughlin	Epsilon Association
John F. Donovan	Camp Dresser & McKee Inc.
Peter Weiskel	USGS
Jamie Heller	EOEA

Agenda Item #1: Executive Director's Report

Consolidated water supply permitting applications: The permit group met on August 9th and is expecting a formal presentation of the streamlining process in October. A final approval by the Water Resources Commission is expected by the end of the year.

Sithe Energy request for determination of applicability under the Interbasin Transfer Act: Sithe Edgar is requesting water from Quincy under the MWRA Straddle Policy and is seeking a determination of applicability under the Act. The deadline for the Commission to make a determination will be the September meeting.

Town of Hopkinton determination of applicability under the Interbasin Transfer Act: The Commission has requested additional information in reference to the submittal. Most of the information was received in August. Upon receipt of rest of the information, the Commission will have 90 days to make a determination.

Agenda Item #2, Meeting Minutes

McGinn, with a second by Butler, moved to

Approve the meeting minutes for March and June 1999 as presented.

The revised meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

Agenda Item #3, WRC determination under ch. 414 Act of 1958 regarding the Town of Holden's use of Muschopauge Pond

In a letter of June 24, 1999, the Town of Holden requested the Commission to issue a determination under chapter 414, Acts of 1958 regarding withdrawals from Muschopauge Pond in the Towns of Holden and Rutland. The Pond is an important water supply source for the Town of Holden and the only water supply source for the Town of Rutland. Under ch. 414 the Commission has the responsibility, upon request, to make a determination of how much water either town can use when the pond drops below elevation 1024.04, which is 60 inches below the high water mark

DEM staff met with representatives from Holden, Rutland and DEP to gather information on the use of the Pond. Holden currently is requesting to withdraw 350,000 gallons per day from the pond when it is between 60 and 75 inches below high water, or 175,000 gallons per day over the existing agreement between the towns.

The Town of Rutland does not have any mandatory conservation measures in place, and there is a concern about the overuse of additional water prior to the implementation of conservation measures. DEP expressed concern about the Town exceeding water usage in the past and stated that the Town of Holden needs long term water supply options. The town is working with its selectmen to initiate conservation measures. The WRC is unlikely to permit the variance until Holden takes all reasonable actions to reduce peak demands and maximize alternative sources of water. Subsequently, the Town of Holden withdrew its request for a determination.

Agenda Item # 4: Public comments on draft staff recommendation for Stoughton's Interbasin Transfer application for the Cedar Swamp well

The public hearing was held on July 21, 1999 at the Stoughton Town Hall. Comments received have been summarized in the memo included in the meeting package. The town of Stoughton has requested that DEP extend their declaration of a water emergency. Stoughton is feeling pressured to join the MWRA, but the Town would rather maintain local control over their own water supply. Stoughton has also expressed concern that a "conditional" approval under the Interbasin Transfer to look for additional sources of water would create additional costs for the Town. Stoughton needs water and that the Town has done everything in their power to conserve water was a main point of concern expressed in the comments.

Michele Drury recognized Stoughton's conservation methods, but offered the suggestion of having the town develop better water usage reporting methods to help improve accuracy for the annual report.

Andrew Miller of CDM, presented a rebuttal of the Cedar Swamp Staff Recommendation. The WRC is scheduled to vote on the recommendation in September.

Agenda Item #5: Interbasin Transfer Performance Standards

Drury reported on the development of guidance for some elements of the IBT Performance Standards. DEP will take the lead in the issue of guidance for the development of viable in-basin sources for both water supply and wastewater transfers. DEP will also develop means to compare the cost of in-basin source development with costs of developing other potential sources. This will also include a comparison of marginal costs, overall costs, and the impacts on rate structures.

Conservation guidance will be developed using examples of water supply rate structures that have been successfully used to encourage water conservation. DEM will take the lead on this issue and will investigate conservation rate setting methodologies that have been developed either by AWWA or other states or water authorities. Wastewater interbasin transfer guidance will include methods for determining the components of existing wastewater flow (sanitary, inflow, infiltration).

Proponents of wastewater transfers will be directed to use DEP's 1993 Guidelines for Performing Infiltration/Inflow Analyses and Sewer System Evaluation Survey (Section 5) or other widely accepted engineering methodology when applying for an Interbasin Transfer of wastewater. Staff will be looking at each application on a case by case basis weighing each application on its own merit. Clayton moved, with a second by Butler that

The WRC approve the amended definition of the local water resources management plan, as found in the 8/12/99 Draft #4, Appendix B, page 16 of the Interbasin Transfer Act Performance Standards Guidance.

The motion passed unanimously.

Rich moved, with a second by Clayton, that

The WRC approve the Interbasin Transfer Act Performance Standards Guidance, Draft #4 as amended, to be evaluated on an annual basis, and to be amended with a footnote on minimum streamflow analysis to explain the 15% rule of thumb.

The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #6: Definition of a stressed basin

Gartland reported that the stressed basin subcommittee reviewed two documents from DEP which outline several methods to evaluate potential impacts of proposed water supply and wastewater projects. The DEP Site Screening Document and the DEP Sewer Project Impact contain methods for evaluating how much water could be lost by proposed projects.

Although the two documents would be helpful, there is a problem concerning the amount of data and the time required for performing these types of analyses on a statewide scale.

Agenda Item #7: Current hydrologic conditions

Marler reported that there has been a varying amount of precipitation throughout the state. August precipitation has been lower than expected...hope for increased scattered showers. There have been requests for determination and inquiries about the drought definition and condition...evaluate current drought definition for possible revision.

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Minutes approved 7/13/00